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ABSTRACT

This book synthesizes the views of California's preeminent rural development researchers on how immigration is transforming rural California communities. It draws on papers presented at two conferences held in Asilomar and Riverside (California) in 1995 and 1996. Conference participants were asked to consider whether rural poverty is being re-created through immigration and what is likely to happen to poor rural residents and their children if poverty increases. The book emphasizes four themes. First, it is unlikely that the level and composition of immigration from Mexico will change in the near future. Second, the children of farmworkers raised and educated in the United States avoid farm work, and farmworkers move on as quickly as possible to more stable and higher-paying jobs. Communities and migrant assistance programs try to provide farmworkers and their children with the education to move into nonfarm jobs, but these integration efforts also reinforce farmers' assertions that U.S. workers will not do farm work and the only option is continued immigration. Third, unlike the one-to-one relationship between child population growth and school enrollment, the rate at which poor rural people apply for and receive public assistance is increasing more slowly than their numbers. Fourth, the binational labor market is so well established between rural Mexico and rural California that the United States must take an interest in rural Mexico and its development. The book is organized into three parts: history and impacts of immigration in the rural United States and immigration patterns in California; key findings

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from seven in-depth studies of rural California towns; and public policies on immigration and integration. The bulk of the references to migrant education occur on pages 70-78. (Contains 108 references, 9 data tables and figures, and an index.) (SV)

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